Nepal, on the ground of India's security perception, made it obligatory for everyone who visits Nepal by Air should possess a passport or voter I.D;

(b) whether it is also a fact that this has affected both Nepali and Indian businessmen, particularly Indian cottage industries who supply most of the items required by Nepal Tourism; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to safeguard the interest of Indian businessmen in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR) : (a) There has been decline in the number of Indian tourists visiting Nepal in recent time.

(b) and (c) We have no confirmed reports of loss of business in the cottage industries of Nepal or India as a result of decline in the volume of tourists. However, India Airlines continue to operate their Flights to Nepal existing mechanisms between the two countries to promote trade and tourism look into such issues on a continuous basis.

Condition of ITDC Hotels

†4116. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government have been drawn to the news-item appearing in 'Punjab Kesari' dated 7th January and 20th June, 1999 captioned "Paryatan Vikas Nigam Ka Hotel division Doobta Jahaj" and "Bhartiya Paryatan Nigam Mein Kahin ankush nahin";

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) the action taken/propose to be taken by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Necessary action is taken by the ITDC management on specific complaints and also suggestions regarding performance of the Company.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.